

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A device for clamping and ablating tissue comprising:

a first handle member;

a second handle member;

first and second mating jaw members associated with the first and second handle members, respectively, the jaw members being movable by the handle members between a first open position and a second clamped position, the jaw members having outer surfaces with opposed mating surfaces, each mating surface having a width jaw;

a first elongated electrode extending along the length of the first jaw member;

a second elongated electrode extending along the length of the second jaw member;

the first and second electrodes each having a width of less than or equal to one-third the width of its associated mating surface and being adapted to be connected to an RF energy source so that, when activated, the first and second electrodes are of opposite polarity.

2. The device of claim 1 wherein the electrodes are less than or equal to 1.25mm in width.

3. The device of claim 2 wherein the electrodes are between approximately 0.12 to 0.6 mm in width.

4. A tissue grasping apparatus comprising:

first and second grasping jaws, the grasping jaws being

relatively moveable between open and closed positions; each jaw having a width including a elongated electrode and a clamping surface in face-to-face relation with the electrode and clamping surface of the other jaw; the face-to-face electrodes being of opposite polarity and connectible to a power source for providing an electrical current between the electrodes, the electrodes having a width of less than or equal to one-third the width of its associated jaw.

5. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein the electrodes are less than or equal to 1.25 mm in width.

6. The apparatus of claim 5 wherein the electrodes are between approximately 0.12 to 0.6 mm in width.